1:Sanders Z-5H (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

582 583 eldest. Nor is a young man supposed to undertake marriage on his own account until those sisters near his own age have all been provided with a suitable husband, which means with a dowry. Sometimes this may take a man until his fortieth year, after which he begins to contemplate matrimony or forego it altogether. A reverse twist, somewhat in evidence today, is for a man to marry a woman with a good dowry and then turn around and use that dowry for the marriage of his sister. But, in reality, this defeats the main purpose of the dowry which is to enable the young couple to have the necessary wherewithal to start a home of their own. There is no installment-buying procedure on which they can rely; the husband's income will only be enough to meet daily expenses and not large enough to cover furniture or payment on a house. These should be provided when one marries or the family will never have any economic security.

184 583 It should be pointed out that among some of the shepherd groups there is no dowry requirement at all. The same holds true for some villages in the Grammos Mountain area and in villages around Kozane, on the Macedonian-Thessalian border. In fact, near Kozane money may even be given to the girl's father because he is losing part of his labor supply (his daughter) which he had produced "with the sweat of his brow." In other villages such as Litohoron, near Katerine in the shadow of Mount Olympus, few young men demand a dowry, but people there recognize that they are exceptional in this regard. Around Arta, dowries are given but are not considered important in some of the villages.

Throughout most of Northern Greece, certainly in Macedonia and Thrace, a girl's dowry consists only of the necessary household furniture, mattresses, linens, blankets, and clothing. In some places, such as Kavalla, the girl upon marriage may be given the share of her father's estate (land), which would normally be hers at his death; but throughout other parts of Macedonia, such a division may not be made until long after her marriage upon her father's disablement or death. She may have some money, but that is not stressed as a part of her dowry unless she is angling for someone from a large town or city. The demand for cash is beginning to infiltrate into the villages around Serrai (where a small holding or a pair of oxen has usually been considered sufficient), as it will eventually throughout many of the areas where it is not now customary.

As one moves southward, the importance of land as an element in the dowry increases. In Thessaly, for instance, land and perhaps some livestock are sought in addition to the household and linen contributions. Where there is no land, the girl may offer from fifty to one hundred and fifty sovereigns, depending upon the value of the land in the village from which she comes.

But, more and more, gold sovereigns are considered the basic element in the dowry, with the understanding that household goods and linens are

2: Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) 963 EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

583 wedding to take the *rukha* and the house furnishings she has received as gifts
585 to the groom's home. The groom hires a truck to do the job, not because there is
286 so much furniture, but because of the quantity of *rukha*. A Vasilika girl is expected to have woven at home approximately thirty sheets, six light blankets, two heavy woolen carpets, five lighter woolen floor coverings, five coarse woolen blankets, four mattress covers, ten carry-all bags or sacks, two heavy ornamental table covers, one red-and-white striped and one blue-and-white striped tablecloth with twelve napkins to match each of the cloths, six cotton face towels, and two long cotton towels for the tray in which loaves of bread are left to rise before baking. To this accumulation she will add several pieces that are bought from
438 itinerant merchants and embroidered at home. Also purchased, usually in town,
352 are white sheets, pillow cases, and turkish towels as well as the material for
431 about six pairs of curtains. Furniture consisting of a wooden wardrobe, a bed, a table, and some chairs may be added, as are the cooking and serving utensils given to the girl as gifts. The colorful collection fills a small pick-up truck, and
585 the sight of one of these on the road with laughing and singing young men crowding whatever space is left is a sure sign of a wedding. On Sunday morning the groom's party, including his marriage sponsor (*kumbaros*), arrive at the house of the bride. The *kumbaros* leads the group to the house, only to find the door closed and locked. He begs that the door be opened. The girls inside giggle and demand 1,000 drachmas to open the door. After some bargaining, the *kumbaros* gives a five-drachma piece and the party comes in. It is the
608 *kumbaros* who rents the bride's white wedding gown, provides the wedding
262 crowns, the large white candles which are held at the ceremony, and the *kufeta*, the sugar covered almonds arranged in small packages of white netting, tied with a white ribbon, which he distributes to each of the guests after the ceremony.
574 After the wedding feast, for which musicians are hired so that the guests can
534 sing and dance, the bride is accompanied to the groom's home by her brothers
152 and sometimes a sister. The women, including the bride, all cry as they leave
178 the girl with her new husband.[2] But even among farmers these customs are changing, and in recent years the bride and groom have taken to leaving the wedding guests to go off on a short honeymoon.

Disposition of Dower Property

425 After the marriage of a farmer, the couple is settled in the man's village,
583 usually in the home of his parents. The groom has acquired some parcels of
182 land in his wife's village and a small hoard of cash as well. For the first few years of his marriage, he may go to his wife's village to work the land himself,
591 or he may contract with his father-in-law or with one of his brothers-in-law to
427 work it for him on shares. Either way he will have occasion to visit his wife's village and to have some association with her father and brothers. In the meantime,
574 he is likely to be looking for an opportunity to exchange land with a farmer who

[2] The description of the engagement and wedding ceremonies is not complete. The details selected are meant to give only an impression of the nature of these affairs.

2:Friedl E-5 (1955-1959)1963 EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

lives in his wife's village and has married a girl from his own settlement and, therefore, has land near the groom's village. A farmer husband may even be willing to consider the sale of the land in his wife's village to make a good purchase nearer home. Neither of these possibilities may come to fruition for years, so that they may remain subjects for long-term discussion between a man and his father- and brothers-in-law. To summarize the situation, land given as one part of the dowry and village exogamy have the consequence of stimulating land exchanges and sales in the Boeotian countryside, of stimulating the visits of men among the villages in the region with a consequent exchange of views and ideas, and of providing an economic focus for maintaining some kind of relationships between affinal relatives, that is relatives by marriage. The system of transferring land as dowry has the effect also of permitting a man to utilize his wife's property throughout his married life instead of having to wait to do so until after his wife's father's death.

The actions of the villagers and the tone in which they discuss these questions suggest that although there is some sentiment attached to the land inherited from a father and to the land that were parts of a mother's dowry, the symbolic value of particular parcels of land as a link between generations does not usually take precedence over the economic value of the land as an income and food producer.

We have still to consider the question of the ultimate disposition of dower properties in marriages between farmers. The Greek Civil Code states that dower property must be accounted for separately from that owned or eventually inherited by the husband, and as we have seen, stipulates that the consent of the wife is required before dower property can be sold or exchanged. If there is a divorce, the wife is entitled to the return of the dower property or of its equivalent. In the house of the groom's father, the newly married couple is given a room in which they and, later, their children sleep. Here the bride's trousseau gives the room a personal touch. Both the young people work on the farm holdings of the groom's father along with his father, mother, and brothers, and unmarried sisters. They also work on the young wife's dower lands. The income from these may be pooled with that from the paternal holdings but need not be. The young husband's father has jurisdiction over the ordinary living expenses of the entire household and distributes the cash needed for purchases of clothing, food, and household equipment. During the lifetime of his father, the cash portion of the dowry may be invested by the son in additional land or in some other capital equipment such as a diesel pump. Under no circumstances do the villagers consider it proper to sell dower lands or to use dower funds for ordinary living expenses. Only the need for money for a very serious illness or for some other emergency is felt to justify such action. In whatever form, the dowry is considered capital which may be invested or saved to add to the estate available for the newly married couple's children.

After the death of the husband's father, the young man continues to live with his brothers, most of whom are likely to be married by now, until they decide to separate and divide the patrimony. This now consists of the property their father inherited from his father's patrimony, the dower property of their

2: Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) 963 EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

596 ing composition of the households is a deceptive base for understanding the
594 principles of organization of households in the village. The existent situation is
178 one in which elementary family households predominate, but the mental construct which influences the formation of new households does not seem to have changed from the old expectation that several married farming brothers will live together. It remains as a latent principle, available for implementation whenever the circumstances warrant it.

Consequences of the Dowry System

428 The discussion of the dowry as a mechanism of inheritance for children
583 of farmers who remain farmers may now be summarized. The dowry is part of
182 a system in which children receive property through the parents of both their fathers and their mothers. Property from two sources merges in each generation
[594] and is redistributed in the next generation. Although patrilineally inherited lands (those passed from a father to his sons in each generation) have some continuity in space and have some continuity of ownership in the male line, such lands always constitute only one part of the total holdings of any particular elementary family. Therefore, in Vasilika and its vicinity, the pattern of land and money circulation through inheritance has two facets: one portion that is patrilineally inherited straight down the line of males; a second, distributed at marriage, that eventually circulates among unrelated elementary families. The system
[421] cannot be described as one in which women inherit from women, in spite of the legal residual control of a woman over her dower properties, because brothers have equal rights with their sisters to their mother's dower lands. In Vasilika, at least, there is neither an explicit nor an implicit pattern of giving daughters only dower property and sons only patrilineally inherited lands.

602 The combination of practices including the function of the dowry as
428 inheritance, land as a major form of property, and village exogamy have some
●425 further consequences for the relation of property to groups of kinsmen in the Boeotian countryside. In spite of patrilocal residence and some patrilineally in-
[613] herited land, the descendants of a male line are not associated with any particular landed estates. Since no man owns or farms exactly the same holdings as his father farmed before him, nor the same holdings his brothers have, and since he himself will expect to work different lands in different communities even in the course of his own adult life, the permanent association of certain estates with
[583] certain lineages is obstructed (Friedl 1959b). Moreover, since dowries move
[582] down the generations and not across to a man of one's own generation who might use the property to marry off one of his daughters, there is no economic
[671] advantage to brother-and-sister exchange marriages. This situation is congruent
[795] with both the Greek Orthodox Church's and the Civil Code's (Section 1357) prohibitions on marriages between sisters and brothers-in-law and between
[611] cousins to the third degree. This rule, as well as the bilateral reckoning of kin in Greece (Section 1356), prevents the transfer of property at marriage from resulting in either a series of equal exchanges between two sets of kin groups

2:Friedl E-5 (1955-1959)1963 EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

or in a regular pattern of circulation through several generations among particular sets of such groups. The control of property establishes social links between a man and his wife's relatives not only in the ways we have mentioned, but because his wife's parents and brothers and sisters have a legal and customary right to be consulted before the final alienation of dower property (Section 1418). These links last only one generation, however, so that in each generation a new network of relations between elementary families in the neighborhood develops, clustering around the management of dower properties. These matters are important because they reveal some of the economic and social structure of Vasilika and its neighborhood that is congruent with the type of relationships people, both kin and non-kin, have with each other (see Chapter 5).

One other situation occurs frequently enough in Vasilika to be worth mentioning. When a farmer has no sons to inherit his land and his house, but has a daughter, the father may acquire a man's assistance on the farm by importing a son-in-law. Such a man is called a *soghambros* in Vasilika; he is a husband who moves into his wife's household instead of vice-versa. The importation of a *soghambros* is also a solution to the problem of a young widow who has no grown sons to run the farm left by her husband and arranges a second marriage for herself with a man who is willing to work her first husband's holdings and her original dower lands. Since a *soghambros* is always a manager of, and the laborer on, property belonging to others and is expected to bring no property of his own with him, there is a slight social stigma attached to the status of Vasilika. The villagers say also that a *soghambros* is not "master in his own house." Certainly, the lot of a man who is not a master in his own house and comes as a stranger to a village where most of the other men have known each other all their lives is not a happy one. But a *soghambros* is not really dishonored by his position; the villagers, in this situation, as in so many others, recognize the practical necessities which brought about the arrangement and do not strongly condemn a man for making the best of his difficulties.

The dowry in Vasilika enters into the life of the villagers in other ways besides inheritance at marriage. It has long served as a means of upward social mobility for girls. Since, as we have seen, the marriage of a daughter is among the most important obligations of parents, the dowry comes into the consciousness of the villagers more often as a property requirement for marrying off their daughters than as a means of transmitting inheritance. When, in addition, the high value placed on upward social mobility is translated into an effort to find urban sons-in-law for one's daughters, the dowry emerges as a mechanism for increasing the social prestige of the family. Farmers are willing to give larger dowries in exchange for the great satisfaction they derive from having town sons-in-law. In Vasilika, the education of some sons has released land to add to the girls' dowries. Improved agricultural income has also enabled the farmers to give larger dowries. In the decade ending in 1959, every marriage of a Vasilika daughter whose father was in the upper half of the village's income range had been one with a man of respectable occupation who lived in a provincial town or in Athens. The husbands are tailors, small retail store-owners, or civil service workers. One young man is a photographer, another is a gymnasium

2:Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) 1963 EH1 Greece EH1
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professor who has become the principal of his gymnasium. In 1961, however, the son of a rather prosperous village farmer became attracted to a daughter of another Vasilika farmer with good land holdings. The young man asked his father to arrange the marriage for him, and, since all the conditions were entirely suitable, the young couple were engaged.

The trend in favor of town husbands prevails, however, among most of those who can afford it. Once a few girls had married urban men, the rivalry between village families led to greater efforts to secure town husbands for the others. Consequently, there has been an inflation in dowries which is alarming the villagers themselves. In the early 1950's, a *prika* worth $3,000 was enough for a town husband of no special prestige; by the late 1950's, the same kind of man was asking for one worth $4,500.

The inflation has had several consequences. Often the value of the dowry can no longer be limited to the share of the inheritance to which a girl is entitled. Farming sons are willing to give up some portion of their shares so that their sisters can "live well," as they put it. The brothers gain also from the added prestige and influence of the family. These in turn may make it possible for them to find a girl with a larger dowry than their property qualifications might warrant. A farmer so situated may make higher demands on the ground that his and his wife's children will have an urban aunt and uncle. The town sister might provide board for her nephews and nieces (girls are increasingly being sent to gymnasium) while they are in school and can also be expected to help them find jobs.

Another consequence of the dowry inflation is the increasingly late age of marriage for the village girls and the town men. It takes farmers longer to accumulate the larger amounts of cash for the dowry, and the prospective grooms longer to attain a position or income at least partially commensurate. Vasilika's girls who marry town men are usually between twenty-five and thirty. Those whose fathers have few land holdings, and consequently can offer only small dowries, have been marrying farmers from other villages or within Vasilika itself and have been in their early twenties at the time of the engagement.

Now let us consider the disposition of the dowry which goes with a girl marrying a town husband. First, if he accepts land as part of the dowry, he will of necessity have it worked by his wife's male relatives. In time, however, often by the end of the first decade of the marriage, the son-in-law may wish to expand his shop, or may wish to start building a house for himself or for his daughter's dowry, or may hear of a good investment opportunity. He will want money for these purposes, and so he begins, with his wife's consent and after consultation with her father, to arrange for the sale of dowry lands. Since the 1950's, prospective town grooms have been less willing to take land which they know they will eventually want to sell, and have been asking for cash or for a house in town. Anticipating this situation, several of Vasilika's farmers who have small daughters have begun to use their savings and even to sell a little land in order to build houses in Athens or in a provincial town so that by the time their daughters are ready to marry, the houses will provide the main portion of the dowry.

2:Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) 1963 EH1 Greece EH1
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of the dowry. Rents are high and earnings relatively low in cities so that houses are a good investment. However, since building materials must be bought, and contractors paid, in cash, the houses may take many years to build. The young couple may then move into the habitable shell, and the rest of the dwelling will be completed out of the farmer's then current income. This kind of dowry-on-the-installment-plan becomes part of the marriage contract. It is often a source not only of continuing long-term discussions between a farmer and his town son-in-law, but also a source of quarrels—what in Greece are called *fasaries*.

The rate of movement of farmers' daughters into the towns and cities has been accelerating in the last decade, but marriages to urban husbands are not a new phenomenon. Between 1930 and 1950, at least five of Vasilika's women married "into Athens."

This type of marriage, like those discussed above in which both bride and groom are members of farm families, accelerates land sales and exchanges. The network of association which develops between Vasilika's residents and their relatives in Athens and the towns, is, however, perhaps the most important consequence of the urban marriages of village women (Friedl 1959a). In addition to the economic reasons for continuing relationships, there are several customary patterns which increase the frequency of contacts between the two groups. Lonely village mothers are grateful for visits from their married daughters and their grandchildren, and the midsummer season not uncommonly finds city women with their children back in the village visiting their parents, often for as long as a month or two. A return to one's village for Easter, sometimes for most of the Holy Week as well, is a well-known pattern in Greece. *Paniyiri* in one's *patridha* (home village) is another occasion for visiting.

Journeys in the opposite direction also occur with some frequency. Village men and women, when ill, may enter hospitals in a town in which they have sons or daughters, or brothers or sisters. Village men visit their town brothers and bring their children; occasionally a child spends a summer with his town aunt or uncle. Visits to the village or to the town usually last several days. They are made possible by still another congruent pattern of Greek culture. Neither the villagers nor their town relatives seem to have any strong need for personal privacy. Visiting relatives are bedded down on pallets when there are not enough regular beds, and it is not considered either indecent or especially uncomfortable for one or even two families to sleep in the same room. It is through this intervisiting process that so many urban traits of culture are introduced to the villagers and, indeed, that some village patterns are conserved in urban areas.

An additional consequence of the town marriages of village girls is that rural wealth derived from land flows into the cities. This wealth is an addition to what the productivity of land normally contributes to urban centers in the form of food, taxes, and the export of rural produce. A portion of the farmer's profits, through the dowry, is being used, it would seem, directly to support a part of the urban population. When the dowries are invested in housing or in small commercial enterprises, many low-salaried employees, civil service workers,

3:Friedl E-5 (1955-1956) 1959 EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

have one daughter married to a tailor in a nearby town, and perhaps another daughter married to a farmer in another village. His own younger brother and one or two of his wife's brothers may be Athenians in white-collar occupations or in one of the professions.

I do not suggest that such a distribution of kin is in itself necessarily significant for understanding urban-rural relations. If the village children who had achieved higher social status in the towns and cities felt that the maintenance of their new status demanded a repudiation of their village-bound relatives, they might sever all connections with the villages as quickly as possible. Or, if the demands made upon upwardly mobile members of the family by those still in the villages were too great, it might also be necessary for village connections to be broken. If these conditions existed, the main line of connection between the villages and the national institutions, and thereby with urban influences, would have to be restricted to contacts with a separate cultural elite (priests, teachers) or with functionally specific economic and political mediators.

This is emphatically not the case in Greece. A farmer and his wife, his adult sons and daughters, and, through the dowry system, his sons-in-law, all have some rights over the farmer's real property. In addition, each member of this group is entitled to benefit from whatever influence or good-will any one or more of the members may have acquired in the village or in the towns. All important decisions concerning any member of this group or any of their children are therefore made jointly and after considerable face-to-face discussion. Dowry arrangements, sales and exchanges of land, house-building, the education of the children, possible sources of employment in the towns: these and similar matters are settled only through long group conferences.

These conferences are made possible by four mutually reinforcing patterns of Greek culture, in spite of the geographical scatter of the individuals concerned. First, Greeks expect that major decisions will not be arrived at in a hurry, but may—and frequently do—take as much as a year or two of discussion. Second, Greeks consider visiting between country and city kin a highly favored form of recreation for both parties. Third, Greeks do not expect and do not value personal privacy. And fourth, the attitudes of the upwardly mobile urban kin and of the remaining rural kin to each other are conducive to continuing interaction.

The first of these patterns, the habit of long-continued discussion of a problem, is a recognized pattern that goes back to the *Iliad*. The span of time over which discussions continue is augmented by the fact that even when a decision is arrived at, it is not considered final and irrevocable. For example, a dowry contract may call for the transfer of a parcel of land from the bride's father to the bride herself. Two years later, however, the girl's husband may decide that he would prefer his wife to have the money value of the land which would then enable her to buy some town real estate from which the new family could derive more income. This is considered a proper subject for discussion by the bride's father and his brothers as well as by the groom. It might result in the

3:Friedl E-5 (1955-1956) 1959 EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

sale of what is still considered family land—a project which is never undertaken lightly. In a sense, therefore, a case of this kind represents a situation in which the dowry contract is renegotiated two years after the marriage.

The pattern of visiting in Greece has certain regularities. The town-dwellers are apt to go back to their home villages or to those of their wives at least twice a year, at Easter and at the patron saint's day celebration of the village. They also go back frequently for baptisms, weddings, and funerals, and sometimes for the celebration of the name-day of a brother or a father. A man and his family often spend a summer vacation in his village or his wife's. "He has gone back to his village" is a remark made frequently about a vacationing Athenian, and it is regarded as self-explanatory. Townswomen sometimes come to visit the village, bringing their young children with them. This is especially common during the busy agricultural seasons when the grandmother can act as baby-sitter and the young mother can once again help in the fields. In the reverse direction, young unmarried nieces and nephews may spend extended periods visiting their urban aunts and uncles. A village farmer often takes a young son to visit a city relative. A village girl may spend several months, or even years, with a town relative, while she learns to sew or to work as a hairdresser. A town godparent may invite a village godchild to stay at his home for a month or two. Village mothers occasionally go on short visits to their town daughters, although this last is considerably rarer than visiting in the other direction.

All these visits include at least overnight stays, and may last for weeks or longer. They are made possible partly by improved road systems and bus and train services, which, in a country as small as Greece, permit travel at reasonable cost. More important, however, is the Greek lack of interest in privacy. In fact, the notion of privacy cannot be expressed by any Greek word in common use. This lack of concern is reflected in the sleeping arrangements which prevail both in the villages and among the less sophisticated in the towns, including Athens. It is taken for granted that parents and grown children of both sexes may sleep in the same room, and that, if there are not enough beds —and there rarely are—pallets strewn on the floor provide a perfectly adequate substitute. A Greek household is disgraced if there are insufficient pallets and bed-linen available to sleep at least a half-dozen extra people. The entertainment of one's kin is therefore not limited by the number of rooms in a house or apartment, nor by the fact that a household may be too poor to have a large number of bedsteads. Moreover, crowded sleeping arrangements are not considered a hardship by either the urban relative visiting the village or by the villager visiting the city or town.

Continuing relations between urban and country kin are also facilitated by the fact that, in Boeotia, minimum literacy at the least is almost universal among the male villagers, so that arrangements for visits may be made by correspondence. They are also made by word of mouth, since traveling villagers are willing to carry messages.

Finally, the kinship element in urban-rural relations tends to lessen the

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1
Lofiscos

[Villages of the Plains]

423 sons or grandsons of men who once tilled the Turk's lands for
427 him on a sharecropping basis. They stayed behind when the
[621] Turk departed, and in due course fell heir to his land.

These changes did not happen all at once. When the Turkish landowner left he sold his rights to a wealthy Greek who lived in Larissa. The new landlord continued the old arrangements, with the difference that he was an absentee. Early in the twentieth century, however, widespread peasant unrest manifested itself in Thessaly, and in 1912 a law of expropriation was passed
[425] against the large landowners. But it was not until 1920 that the effect of this law was felt in Lofiscos. In that year government surveyors and officials carried out a general distribution of the estate. Every male resident of the village nineteen years old or over was given possession of 137 stremmata of land (34¼ acres). In addition, 15 stremmata (3¾ acres) were assigned to each male member of a community of semi-migratory shepherds who had immemorially used these lands for winter pasture, paying a fee to the owner for the privilege of grazing their sheep on the stubble left after the grain harvest. A thousand stremmata (250 acres) remained in the possession of the absentee land-
[621] owner. The rest of the land was left as common pasture. Much of it was unsuited to cultivation because of flooding in the spring; and in any case 137 stremmata was about all the land a single family could easily cultivate with the tools then available to them.

423 The land settlement of 1920 remained essentially unchanged thereafter. Many of the men who received their farms at that time are still alive; five families had moved into the village by 1956, but no one had moved away. The five newcomers owned no land at all, but worked for the established farmers of the village or, more often, on the big estate of the absentee owner. (Incidentally, this estate survived in 1956 as a working unit in spite of the land law of 1952 which forbade ownership of more

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1
Nea Eleftherohori

[Villages of the Plains]

423 The land now occupied by the villagers of Nea Eleftherohori
425 was owned by a Turkish landlord until 1912, and worked by a group of Turkish peasants. These were harried from the land when the Greek army came north in the first Balkan war of 1912. Thereupon, some of the inhabitants of Eleftherohori, together with a large group from another similar hill village, called Katophigi, simply squatted on the vacant land. They apportioned the booty on a first-come, first-served basis, effective title depending on tillage of particular fields. Since there was plenty of land for everyone, this provoked no difficulty.

The situation was radically changed and legally stabilized in 1927 when government authorities surveyed and redistributed [166] village property. The Greek government was then engaged in settling as many as possible of the refugees who had come from Asia Minor in 1922 and 1923 on land vacated by Turks; but it was not deemed politic to drive the squatters entirely away from what they had seized. Consequently, an estimate of the fertility of the soil was made in order to determine the smallest allotment on which a single family could subsist. In Nea Eleftherohori, the allotment was fixed at 27 stremmata, i.e., 6¾ acres. To permit as many refugees as possible to find land, it was further decided that lots would be assigned only to heads of families, not, as had been done earlier in Lofiscos, to every man, married or single.

As far as the squatters, or "old settlers," were concerned, these policies did not usually involve much loss. To be sure, their holdings were reassigned and particular pieces of land changed hands, but possession was so recent that this in itself did not rouse serious resentment. Moreover, few families failed
× [178] to get as much land as they had previously occupied. When it became known that only heads of families could qualify for an allotment, all the boys of marriageable age, even if only seventeen or eighteen years old, hastened to find themselves wives,

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1
Nea Eleftherohori

[Villages of the Plains]

and thus made good a claim for 27 stremmata. The original squatters' rights had been apportioned on the basis of the amount of land actually tilled by a given family, and as a man or a boy could scarcely cultivate more than about 27 stremmata single-handed with the sort of equipment they had, the old families received about as much land as they had had before. The difference was that the sons escaped from parental control earlier than they would otherwise have done, since title to their share of the land was now vested individually, not, as traditionally, in the parental family as a whole.

The squatters of 1912 had not occupied all the cultivable land. When they had all received their lots, therefore, almost an equal number of refugees, mostly from the Caucasus area, were settled on the remainder. The two groups stood more or less apart, especially at the beginning. Many of the customs of the Caucasus people seemed wild and barbarous to the old settlers. But because the old settlers felt little or no sense of grievance, and because each family was very nearly on a level of economic equality, with 27 stremmata apiece, the fissure between the two groups was not great. Nevertheless, the houses of the old settlers are still separated by about one hundred yards from those occupied by the refugees, so that the village is physically divided into two quite distinct parts.

In 1932 a supplementary land distribution took place, giving families with more than four members an additional 5 stremmata; in 1937 a further adjustment was made when forty-three families removed to a newly drained area in the valley of the Aliakmon River, and left their allotments behind, to be reassigned in chunks of 5 stremmata to the larger families of Nea Eleftherohori. No further official changes have since been made, but the natural processes of death and inheritance have resulted in the splitting up of a few of the allotments into smaller farms, while in some cases formerly separate allotments have been

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1
Nea Eleftherohori

[Villages of the Plains]

423 combined into one holding. The great majority of the families
425 of the village, however, still occupied 27 or 32 stremmata in 1956, and most of the original holders of the allotments were still alive.

178 The land settlement in Nea Eleftherohori differed from that
621 in Lofiscos in two respects. First, the farms in Nea Eleftherohori
241 were less than one fifth as large as in Lofiscos. Second, the new
433 settlers, uprooted from their former homes, whether up the mountain or in distant Asia Minor, left binding customary ways of life behind them, and started off in Nea Eleftherohori without the automatic conservatism and suspicion of innovation typical until very recently of the families of Lofiscos. These differences acted together to make the farmers of Nea Eleftherohori a good deal more willing to try new crops and methods, even before the war, than those in the older Thessalian community. Life on so little land was difficult at best, and anything that promised to bring in a little more seemed worth trying; and when the problems of farming the land were new in any event, there was far less psychological resistance against trying some further innovation.

621 Another contrast with Lofiscos, a contrast perhaps related
163 to the general shake-up of old customary routines which came
433 to the inhabitants of Nea Eleftherohori between 1912 and 1923, is that the new settlers proceeded to procreate children at a far greater rate than occurs in Lofiscos, where families are mostly quite small. [2]

2. It would be very interesting to know why the prosperous peasants of Lofiscos have fewer children than their much poorer fellows in Nea Eleftherohori, but I do not know Lofiscos well enough to hazard an opinion. Can it be that the general market orientation of their agriculture and the habit of calculating in monetary terms leads them to restrict the number of their children deliberately, in some fashion or other, realizing that to divide the family farm among many children spells impoverishment for

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1
Paleo Corinthos

[Villages of the Plains]

recent years, this was the one the villagers most praised, perhaps because it was the newest.

Very considerable inequalities in landholding exist within the village. As a result, some families have profited far more than others from the new prosperity. Since the Greek War of Independence (1821–30), if not before, landholdings in Old Corinth have not been disturbed by wholesale government action, of the sort characteristic in the northern part of the country. The processes of inheritance and marriage settlements, supplemented by purchase and sale of land – something almost unheard of in the northern villages – have resulted in the establishment of extremely complicated property relationships. Renting and sharecropping are both common. In addition, many fields are subject to concurrent rights held by several individuals. This situation arises when heirs have refrained from subdividing an inheritance because such division would reduce the fields to absurdly small dimensions. Instead it has long been the custom to cultivate such fields as a unit and to divide the proceeds, according to some agreed proportion, among all those who have a claim thereto. Over the generations, such concurrent rights have sometimes ramified widely; but the complications of remote family and property relationships are something Greek peasant farmers are able to keep very clear in their heads, with or without written documents.

A substantial proportion of the inhabitants of Old Corinth possess no land at all. They make a living by working for others, either for day wages or on a sharecropping basis. With the introduction of tomatoes and other vegetable crops, together with the revival of the currant market, a definite, though seasonal, shortage of labor has appeared. Substantial farmers (that is, men owning 10 to 20 acres of land) complained of not being able to find enough hands to help them cultivate their fields, even though the wages they paid in the currant fields were

/11 cont./ 000
conditions under which they had to move. At the present time 464
there is some kind of temporary mobility such as working in other 166
villages or sections for wages but they return back /12/ home
again. The type of land distribution obliges every farmer to stay [425]•
where he is. No one is allowed to sell his land nor hire it to any- [427]
one else. As soon as he does this he loses his ownership. With
the increasing population and with ever-decreasing returns from
the soil the future may present us with great mobility problems
of the young men.

Kinship Groups. 602

Kinship group solidarity is very strong among Caucasians and [596]
less among Thracians. Due to the compound family system which 178
has already broken down since the distribution of the land by the 621
government, one finds neighborhoods with strong kinship ties. [582]
Next to the family is the kinship group. Intermarriage is pro-
hibitive among these groups. The kinship group is very different [736]
from the usual type that we know. If there is a widow or orphans [737]
or aged men or women, members of the kinship group feel under
sacred obligation to care for them as they would do for the mem-
bers of their family.

Historical Background. 175
621

We do not have any historical data to show us the date of the
first settlers of this village but the new /13/ resettlers came in
1922. It had had three different conquerors; the Turks in 1448, the [712]
Bulgarians in 1912, and the Greeks in 1913. It also served as the
headquarters of Allied armies of the First World War. The trenches
that surround it and the heavy concrete fortifications show its im-
portance as a military post. People have come and gone. [136]
Nationals changed hands of the village, but the storks still find
the same trees and roofs for their nests convenient, regardless of
the nationality of the inhabitants. If the storks could speak the
language they would tell the people of the futility of the differ-
entiating nationalism. Houses were torn down and new ones built,